

# Notes Concerning the Taxonomic Status of *Coenonympha thyrsis* Freyer

By JOHN G. COUTSIS, M.Arch.\*

*Coenonympha thyrsis* Freyer, an endemic of the island of Crete, was originally described as a good species, but has since been regarded by many authors as a subspecies of *Coenonympha pamphilus* Linnaeus on the basis of superficial affinities toward certain south European forms of the latter and especially toward subspecies *sicula* Zeller, from Sicily.

The various subspecies and forms of *pamphilus* have been defined on the basis of a set of superficial characters involving the width and degree of definition of the dark marginal borders on the upperside, the degree of definition of the oblique post-discal bar on underside of forewing, the presence or absence of small postdiscal spots on hindwings both upperside and underside and by the ground colour and shade arrangement of hindwing underside.

*C. thyrsis* differs from *pamphilus* in ways that are outside this set of differences and in a number of rather diverse points.

*C. pamphilus* is multivoltine and flies in the most southern parts of its range from April till October. *C. thyrsis* is univoltine and flies from May till about end of June. The former is a colony insect within the southern part of its range and is rather localised in areas with a certain degree of moisture. The latter is found practically everywhere within its area of distribution and may be observed flying about even in the driest of situations. The genitalic apparatus of male *thyrsis* differs from that of *pamphilus* by the shorter uncus, falces, valvae and aedaeagus and especially by the much slenderer saccus, which is about half the width of that of the latter. In *thyrsis* the underside of both the forewings and hindwings always has an indented antemarginal silver line, whereas in *pamphilus* this line is always absent. The distal end of the antenna of male *thyrsis* lacks scales all around, while that of

## Plate I

1. *Coenonympha pamphilus* Linnaeus, Krania, Pindos Mts., Central Greece, 1,000 m., 13th May.
  - (a) Genitalic apparatus with right valva and aedaeagus removed (side view); (b) Aedaeagus (side view); (c) Saccus (ventral view).
2. *Coenonympha thyrsis* Freyer, Lefka Ori, Crete, 1,500 m., 12th June.
  - (a) Genitalic apparatus with right valva and aedaeagus removed (side view); (b) Aedaeagus (side view); (c) Saccus (ventral view).
1. Side view of distal end of antenna of male *C. thyrsis*, Faranghi Samarias, Crete, 1,000 m., 12th June.
2. Side view of distal end of antenna of male *C. pamphilus*, Mt. Rhoditis, Lesvos Island, Greece, 24th June.
3. Ventral view of distal end of antenna of female *C. thyrsis*, Road to Kataphygion, Lefka Ori, Crete, 1,200-1,700 m., 12th June.
4. Ventral view of distal end of antenna of female *C. pamphilus*, near Langadha Pass, Mt. Taygetos, Peloponnese, Greece, 1,300 m., 11th June.

\* 4, Glykonos Street, Athens 139, Greece.

male *pamphilus* has a bald patch ventrally, that extends from the tip to about the eighth segment from it. The distal end of the antenna of female *thyrsis* has a bald patch ventrally that extends from the tip to about the fifteenth segment from it, while that of female *pamphilus* has a bald patch ventrally that extends from the tip to about the eighth segment from it.

The degree, constancy and broad range of these differences, as well as their deviation from the set of differences separating the various subspecies and forms of *pamphilus* from each other, suggest that *thyrsis* and *pamphilus* should be considered as being separate species, despite superficial affinities between the two and allopatry.

### References

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APATURA IRIS L. — A SECOND BROOD SPECIMEN. — In the exceptionally hot weather this summer the Purple Emperor was out at least two weeks ahead of its normal emergence period. Of 42 pupae on sleeved willow in our garden 18 emerged before the end of June (including several females) and on 30th June my wife and I saw a female *iris* settled on the ground in a Wiltshire wood. On the same day a captive hand-paired *iris* had already commenced ovipositing and larvae appeared after only five days. One of these early larvae grew rapidly undergoing all four moults and finally pupated on 12th September. The perfect insect, a smallish female, emerged three weeks later on 3rd October. The whole life cycle took place on the same sleeved willow without forcing of any kind. — Dr. C. J. LUCKENS, 52 Thorold Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton, SO2 4JG.

A LATE VANESSA IO L. LARVA. — Baron de Worms' note on late Peacocks (*Ent. Rec.*, **88**: 264) reminds me that I saw a fully-fed *io* larva on the inside wall of my garage here, clearly looking for somewhere to pupate, as late as last Sunday, 23rd October. This is almost unbelievably late for a larva, and since a number of imagines were flying in my garden during August and September, I think it very likely that this represented a second brood. Unfortunately I was unable to give time to box it at that moment, and it had disappeared on my return later. I wonder if it will emerge and, if so, when? — N. A. WATKINS, Hazel Mead, Priory Road, Easton-in-Gordano, Nr. Bristol, BS20 0PR, 27.x.76.